

APPENDIX  
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## Balancing act

**U**NFORTUNATELY, it is not possible for Washington to resolve its Philippine problem as easily as it resolved its Haitian problem.

The Haitian problem was a snap. Conditions in Haiti were so bad that everyone knew that time was up for "Baby Doc" Duvalier. He was going. Washington did not have to push to get him out. All it had to do was arrange a safe departure.

The Philippine situation is more complicated. President Marcos has a large following. It is even conceivable that he could have won an honest election, although by a narrow margin. We can never know how many honest ballots were cast for him last week.

But there was an election, under constitutional electoral machinery. There was a massive turnout of voters. Millions voted. The Philippine Republic is an independent and sovereign country. It would be improper, and probably in the long term damaging to the net interests of the US, for the US to set itself up as the overt judge of the election machinery of the Philippines, declare a fraud, and force the Marcos oligarchy out of office.

On the other hand, the US has clear and important interests in what happens in the Philippines. That country is an important trading partner of the US. It exists in the Western community. Subic Bay is not only one of the best naval anchorages in the far Pacific, it is also the best-equipped naval base the US has in that part of the world.

It is the opinion of the best intelligence experts in Washington that the longer Mr. Marcos remains in office, the stronger will be the communist insurgency. It has grown steadily over the past five years or so.

The US cannot afford to sit back and allow the situation in the Philippines to degenerate to the point where the communist insurgents will take control of the country and move it over into the power orbit of the Soviet Union. Nor can the US afford to take overt action to force Mr. Marcos out of office.

This is a quandary, and a difficult one. But there are things that can be done in the area between overt interference in an internal Philippine affair and doing nothing. One thing would be to start building alternative naval and air bases.

Building air bases is relatively easy. Scores of air-strips left over from World War II could be brought back into usable condition at tolerable expense.

Building a naval base is more tedious and expensive. But having alternative anchorages and repair facilities in the far Pacific would be desirable even if the Philippine bases were under no pressure. They are under pressure on the assumption, by President Marcos, that Washington can't do without him or them.

But let it be known, quietly, that there are other possible bases and let a squadron of bombers and destroyers move elsewhere and start operating from elsewhere. The moment the Philippine armed forces see such things happening, they will want to do something to change matters. They would want to get rid of the Marcos clique, which has lost the confidence of the US, and bring to power a new government able to regain that confidence.

The business and banking community in Manila would want to back the younger officers in the Army who are known to have little use for the high command, made up largely of relatives and personal associates of the Marcos family.

The situation calls for a quiet plan under which the business community and the younger Army officers would come to realize that the welfare of the country calls for getting rid of the Marcos clique. The important first step is to convince the young officers that the US no longer regards Marcos as its chosen instrument, would be happy to see him go, and would be happy to keep the bases in the Philippines if he did go.

Convey that message to the Philippine Army and human nature would probably take over and the people of the Philippines would find themselves with a new government.